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Kyrgyz explosive experts test skills with TCM Airmen



A Kyrgyz Explosive Ordnance Disposal team member assists another with putting on a bomb suit during a basic EOD operation exchange at a U.S.-Kyrgyz military-to-military event at the Transit Center at Manas Dec. 16. This event is the fifth EOD exchange since July 2009.



Airman 1st Class Joseph Riemer, 376th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal team member, shows and explains the functions of EOD tools to Kyrgyz military EOD team members.

Mil to mil exchange brings international services together

Right and below: Kyrgyz military personnel learn a portion of the Transit Center at Manas mission while touring a KC-135 Stratotanker on Dec. 9.



TCM donates to the National Boarding School of Art



Above: A National Boarding School of Art youth sculpts during art class in Bishkek Dec. 28. The school showcased its talented students in appreciation for the furniture donations.



Above left: A youth from the National Boarding School of Art sketches during art class Dec. 28. The Transit Center at Manas in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy donated 89 desks, 100 chairs, 4 book cases and a washing machine for the dormitory.

Above: A youth from the National Boarding School of Art sketches during art class Dec. 28.

Left: Col. Dwight Sones, Transit Center at Manas director, visits the National Boarding School of Art Dec. 28.

Transit Center officials may sweeten the deal

TRANSIT CENTER AT MANAS, Kyrgyzstan -- After coordination between the contracting office, dining facility staff and public health, plans are in works to possibly add cookies and other confections from the surrounding community. Officials have approached two local companies--Schwarzwald (Black Forest) and Tattoo bakeries--to bring TCM a taste of the local fare and help bolster the Kyrgyz economy. The two businesses already bring their products at the weekly bazaar.

"It's difficult for local producers to survive here because of illegal imports," said Ms. Asel Torobekova, Tattoo bakery manager. "Kyrgyzstan is a young country and 90 percent live in poverty. When they buy, they buy for the prices not the quality. Our prices and quality are higher here because we use all natural ingredients, and your business gives us hope that we can work together to improve business here."

The Tattoo bakery has been operating in the local area since 1928 and produces cookies, pastries and candy. The company also keeps a trained staff of chocolatiers and is looking for other avenues to improve their wares.

"The doors of our company are always open to you, and we will do our best to meet all our requirements," she added. "It's been great getting



Tattoo bakery employees sort cookies before the chocolate process.

to know you, and we look forward to having a good future with you and our friendship."

Representatives from the TCM have been working the last eight months to assist the two companies with complying to meet western food service standards. Officials from the expeditionary force support squadron food service, contracting squadron and medical group have offered suggestions and conducted preliminary health inspections in order to open the doors for further business.

"There's been a quick turnaround--they've invested their own money to make a lot of facility improvements," said Maj. Robert Martin, 376th EMDG public health officer. "We've worked with them to increase the sanitation level and in turn made their quality higher."



Left: A Tattoo bakery employee keeps a watchful eye as cookies pass through the quality control section at the bakery before shipping. Transit Center at Manas officials are looking into expanding the dining facility menu to include locally-produced goods.

Learning the ropes of the mission



Above: Mr. Elkinbek Ashirbaev, Sokuluk local administration mayor and 376th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron honorary commander meets with some of the ELRS staff during a tour Jan. 6.

Right: Mr. Elkinbek Ashirbaev, tries on body armor at the Expeditionary Theater Distribution Center.



Patriot Cheerleaders visit Manas



Above: New England Patriot Cheerleaders played with children at a local school as part of an Armed Forces Entertainment tour Dec. 23. The cheerleaders took a cultural tour of Bishkek, performed for deployed military members and toured the Transit Center at Manas.

Top right: Senior Master Sgt. Darrin Jetton, 376th Expeditionary Operations Group superintendent and Staff Sgt. Trish Arena, 22nd Expeditionary Aircraft Refueling Squadron aircraft refueling equipment, sit with children as a local school performs for the New England Patriot Cheerleaders.

Right: A child from a local school performs for the New England Patriot Cheerleaders during their visit.



Transit Center team handed 78-41 basketball loss



Jamal Berry draws a foul against the Ak-Bars (Snow Leopards) team during a basketball game at the Kojomkul Sports Palace in Bishkek, Jan. 15.

TRANSIT CENTER AT MANAS, Kyrgyzstan --

Despite the cold, the Kyrgyz basketball team made short work of the Transit Center at Manas men's team at the Kojomkul Sports Palace Jan. 15.

The Ak-Bars (Snow Leopards) team recruited a few professionals to field their squad for the fifth meeting between the two teams, but despite that fact, it was all in fun and strengthening partnership.

"Last year, things went better," said Mr. Vladimir Trunov, Ak-Bars coach. "I'm a professional, but I know we're not playing against professionals so we didn't play at that level."

Mr. Trunov added that his team enjoys playing with Americans, and they're still learning as well. They've also recently returned from placing high in a 14-country wide tournament in the United States. "We have a combined style of play, but we enjoy playing and learning from American-style basketball."

The Kyrgyz team took the upper hand early and didn't let up until the final buzzer.

Kyrgyz, Americans kick it during holiday soccer tournament



Above and below: Members of the Kyrgyz Soccer Federation and the Transit Center at Manas participate in a friendly game of soccer Jan. 3 at the Freedom Field House.

Right: A member of the soccer federation participates in a friendly game of soccer Jan. 3 at the Freedom Field House.



Transit Center at Manas economic impact as of Jan. 25, 2011

Direct Expenditures	FY08 Actual	FY09 Actual	FY10 Actual	FY11 YTD
Payment to Kyrgyz Govt - Dip Note	\$17,400,000	\$26,620,000	\$60,000,000	\$15,000,000
Payment to Manas International Airport (MIA) (Airport Fees, land leases, contracts)	\$22,426,354	\$22,999,039	\$21,932,478	\$7,922,642
Contributions to Airport Improvements	\$131,000	\$30,600,000	\$0	\$0
Contributions to Kyrgyz Aeronavigation (KAN)	\$480,500	\$0	\$0	\$0
Contract Payments	\$35,351,310	\$24,601,908	\$38,589,978	\$10,821,517
Govt leases (non-MIA)	\$83,726	\$81,562	\$66,596	\$81,491
Programmatic Humanitarian Assistance (HA)		\$1,700,000	\$2,273,488	\$231,709
Subtotal Direct Expenditures	\$75,872,890	\$106,602,509	\$122,862,540	\$34,057,359

Indirect Expenditures

Estimated US Military local spending	\$946,000	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$454,739
Subtotal Indirect Expenditures	\$946,000	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$454,739

Total Economic Impact	\$76,818,890	\$107,640,039	\$123,558,243	\$34,512,098
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TCM spreads Christmas cheer in surrounding community



Above: Santa spreads holiday cheer at the Nizne-Chuisk Village school Dec. 22. Transit center Airmen accompanied Santa to help pass out presents and take children's photos with Santa.

Left: Santa poses for photos at the Children's Cancer Center Dec. 22, after he and several Transit Center at Manas officials visited the facility.

For more information on Transit Center at Manas events or programs, e-mail us at transitcenteratmanas@gmail.com